

Anglo and London Paris National Bank
(Anglo California National Bank, Crocker Bank)
One Sansome Street
San Francisco
San Francisco County
California

HABS No. CA-2185

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ANGLO AND LONDON PARIS NATIONAL BANK

(ANGLO CALIFORNIA NATIONAL BANK ,
CROCKER BANK)

HABS No. CA-2185

Location: One Sansome Street, NW corner of Sansome and Sutter Streets
Assessor's Block 284, Lot 3. San Francisco.
San Francisco County, California.

Present Owner: Moraine Investments

Present Use: Branch bank

Statement of
Significance:

The Anglo and London Paris National Bank is significant as one of the group of historically and architecturally important bank buildings in downtown San Francisco. Within this group, it is particularly notable for its monumental size, prominent location, and adherence to the classical temple form. The building also is a significant example of the works of architects Albert Pissis and George Kelham.

The Anglo and London Paris National Bank was given the highest rating of "5" in the San Francisco Planning Department's Architectural Quality Survey. It also received the highest rating of 5 in the "A" group of significant buildings in the Heritage Downtown Inventory. The inventory notes the building's steel frame and granite construction, its age as an early post-earthquake building, its rich exterior detail, and its classical temple form. The interior also is given an "excellent" for the banking hall's materials, skylight and detail. Its contribution to the streetscape is noted as significant.

PART I HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of Erection: Original building completed in 1910
Addition - 1923

Architect: Original building - Albert Pissis
Addition - George Kelham

Historical Narrative

The Construction and Addition to The Anglo and London Paris National Bank

The Anglo and London Paris National Bank was designed by Albert Pissis in 1908 for the Anglo and London Paris National Bank. The Pissis-designed bank was the corner portion of the present structure, 46' 10" on Sansome Street and 122' 9" on Sutter Street. It was a two story, steel frame, reinforced concrete, granite clad building in a temple form with 36' high Doric columns. Like many other banks built in San Francisco at the time, it was designed in the classical temple form to symbolize the significant role of the financial institution in the community.

In 1915 the bank expanded into the adjoining Holbrook Building at 58-64 Sutter Street. In 1921 San Francisco architect, George Kelham, was commissioned to design an addition to the building. The resulting design nearly tripled the area of the original building and expanded the Sansome Street frontage from one to five bays. The Kelham addition repeated the same giant order of the original building but placed the entrance in the recessed porch as it stands today. The interior was completely reoriented and redesigned at that time, though evidence suggests that some materials have been reused. In 1937, William W. Wurster designed alterations that included elevators, heating, and probably major changes to the mezzanine.

History of the Anglo California Bank, Ltd. and the London Paris and
Bank, Ltd.

The Anglo California Bank, Ltd. and the London Paris and American Bank, Ltd. were two early forerunners of the Anglo and London Paris National Bank which built the building at One Sansome Street. Formed after the flurry of the Gold Rush days in San Francisco, they reflected the growing stability and the scale of financial activity on the West Coast and in San Francisco that attracted foreign investors.

The Anglo California Bank, Ltd., founded in 1873, was the successor to the London firm of J & W Seligman & Company. Its first quarters were located at the northeast corner of California and Leidesdorff Streets. The San Francisco branch managers were Ignatz Steinhart and R. G. Sneath. In 1874, Frederick F. Low, former governor of California, took over the management for the next seventeen years. In 1891 Phillip N. Lilienthal shared the position with Mr. Steinhart until 1908.

In 1876, only a few years after the Anglo California Bank was established, the firm of Lazard Freres, an old silk importing house of New York, London, and Paris, opened an agency in San Francisco. In 1884 the business evolved to form the London, Paris and American Bank, Limited, and was located at 205 Sansome Street. In 1888, the bank moved to an existing building at One Sansome Street, the site of the present bank.

The banking houses of both the Anglo California Bank and the London, Paris and American Bank were destroyed in the earthquake and fire of 1906 but were quickly reopened in temporary headquarters. Subsequently, both banks erected new buildings and resumed normal business.

In 1909, the State of California passed a law forbidding foreign banks from maintaining branches in the state. This action caused Herbert Fleishhacker and his associates to gain control of the foreign stock of both banks and merge them as the Anglo and London Paris National Bank. The new organization included Ignatz Steinhart, chairman of the board; Sigmund Greenebaum, president; Herbert Fleishhacker, first vice-president and manager; Alden Anderson; Joseph Friedlander; Richard Altschul; C. F.

Hunt; and A. Hockstein.

In 1914, the Anglo California Trust was established to handle trust and savings transactions not allowed under the nationalized charter of the Anglo and London Paris National Bank. In 1932 the two Anglo banks consolidated under the name of the Anglo California National Bank of San Francisco, with Mortimer Fleishhacker as chairman of the board and Herbert Fleishhacker as president. In 1956 the bank merged to become the Crocker Anglo Bank branch of the Crocker Bank.

Biographical Information - Albert Pissis

Albert Pissis (1852-1914) was one of San Francisco's leading designers of public and semi-public buildings. Born in Guaymas, Mexico, he was raised in San Francisco from the age of six. He trained at the Ecole des Beaux Arts (1872-1876) in Gaudet's atelier. After traveling throughout Europe, he returned to San Francisco in 1880 to enter the office of William Mooser, Sr. In 1882, he was elected to the American Institute of Architects and soon formed the partnership of Pissis and Moore (1886-1898). When the 1906 earthquake and fire destroyed much of the city, the Beaux Arts movement blossomed on the West Coast with the influx of talented young designers. Pissis was already a mature and established designer and his prominence and leadership in the architectural community continued through most of the major rebuilding period from 1906 to 1915. Through his established skill, training, and position of architectural leadership, Pissis obtained many of the most important commissions available in the city, both before and after the fire. These buildings are frequently characterized by the desirability of their location and large budgets, reflecting the desire on the part of his clients for prestigious and symbolically elegant buildings. Pissis also was known for his use of stone and other high quality materials. He was among the chief exponents of what was then called "modern architecture" with its structure derived from the newly-invented steel frame, and its imagery inspired by the buildings of ancient Rome and the Renaissance. The scale, though monumental, was generally handled with extremely skillful attention to proportion and decorative elements.

Many of Pissis' most noted works survive in San Francisco. The Emporium (835-865 Market Street) and the James Flood Building (870-898 Market Street) were his two largest commissions. Others included The Hibernia Bank (1 Jones Street), and the Mechanics' Institute (57-65 Post Street). Outside of downtown San Francisco, he designed the Home of the Little Sisters of the Poor (Lake Street) and the Jewish Synagogue at California and Webster Streets.

Biographical Information - George W. Kelham

George W. Kelham (1871-1936) was born in Massachusetts and received his first degree in architecture from Harvard. He studied in Rome and Paris at the Ecole des Beaux Arts under DuRoi (1896). He first practiced in New York City between 1886 and 1908 with the well-known firm of Trowbridge and Livingston, and came to San Francisco to supervise the rebuilding of the Palace Hotel for them in 1908. Following its completion, he remained in San Francisco and set up his own practice. He was chief of the Department of Architecture (1912-1915) for the Panama Pacific International Exposition. Appointed supervising architect of the University of California in 1922, he prepared a campus plan for the proposed UCLA campus and also designed four of the first buildings there.

Kelham and his office were capable of working in a wide variety of styles, as illustrated by some of their best San Francisco work such as the Medico-Dental Building (470 Post Street), the Russ Building (235 Montgomery Street), the San Francisco Public Library (200 Larkin Street), Hill Brothers Building (2 Harrison Street), the Pacific Union Club (1000 California Street), and the addition to the Bank of America Building (300 Montgomery Street). H. J. Brunnier, a significant San Francisco structural engineer, was associated with Kelham in many of these projects. Much of the office's work included remodeling or additions to existing buildings. Many of these structures may still be considered models of compatible design and planning today.

PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

General Statement

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: One Sansome is of considerable architectural merit based on its use of the classical temple form, its monumental size, and its careful proportions.
2. Condition of Fabric: Excellent (Portions to be demolished Fall 1981).
3. Summary Description: The building is a two-story with mezzanine rectangular block with a basement, expressed as one monumental unit. Five bays extend along Sansome Street, and five along Sutter Street. The two street elevations are treated as monumental temple walls with Doric details from classical Roman antiquity using a colossal order. The entire building stands on a plinth or base from which the order rises to support a full Doric entablature cornice and balustrade parapet. On the south facade the bays are articulated by engaged columns. On the east facade the order is freestanding. Paired columns frame each of the end bays to express a composition of corner pavilions framing a recessed entrance porch. The details are in a correct Antique Doric mode using fluted columns, a paneled frieze, and an Attic base.

Detailed Description of Exterior

1. Foundation: Reinforced concrete spread footings.
2. Wall Construction: The exterior finish is granite throughout, with masonry back-up on the 1909 structure and concrete on the 1920 addition.
3. Structural Systems: Steel frame construction (encased in concrete and brick) with reinforced concrete floors, walls and roof.
4. Porches, Stoops, Etc.: A loggia is located on the Sansome Street side.

5. Openings, Doorways, and Windows: The window and door openings are articulated by two-story arched openings. The top floor is hidden on the facade behind the attic balustrade and also has windows facing in towards the lightwell. The main entrance is contained in the central bay of the loggia on the east elevation and is approached by several low steps.

6. Roof - Shape and Covering: The roof is flat with a classical balustrade parapet. There is a square central lightwell containing a glazed hipped roof skylight covering the oval dome at the second story roof level.

Detailed Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: The interior includes a major bank exchange hall occupying most of the first floor, a basement vault area and a service basement, a mezzanine level blind to the bank hall, and a second level with a lightwell surrounding the dome.

A. Basement: The basement level contains a large safe deposit lobby; four, large, walk-in bank vaults; employee restrooms and locker rooms; storage, service and mechanical rooms.

B. First Floor: The first floor is occupied primarily by the great exchange hall which is derived from the Roman basilica form and uses a Colossal Doric order to define the main two-story rectangular space flanked by lower side aisles. The most significant aspect of this hall is its immense scale (138' x 60') and the monumentality of its unimpeded space. It is one of the largest and most intact banking halls in the Western United States.

Public and bank staff space is separated by a marble dado rail surrounding nearly the entire central space and forming side courts. This dado along the west wall has bronze and glass teller cages articulated by a fluted Ionic order with tabernacle opening surrounds.

From 1920 to 1981, part of the main banking hall continued 67' north into the adjacent Standard Oil Building (1920-22 George Kelham). When

this area was remodeled in 1981 for a new branch of the Crocker Bank the north wall of the banking hall was removed and a concrete block wall was used to separate the two buildings.

Additional banking space also was gained in 1920 by extending bank operations west into the first floor of the adjacent Holbrook Building (1912 MacDonald & Applegarth). This area contained two large, freestanding bank vaults which were used until the building was vacated in September 1981.

2. Stairways: A main stair leads from the first floor entrance vestibule to the basement safe deposit lobby. The walls, treads and risers are pink marble; tubular railings along both walls are brass.

3. Flooring: Flooring in the main hall and entry vestibule is marble with inlaid borders (covered in carpet in some locations). Flooring in non-public and work spaces and office areas is cork tile (covered with carpet in some locations).

4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: Walls of the main banking hall are plaster-based imitation travertine covered by a uniform light cream color paint. The coffered ceiling in the main hall is punctuated by rosettes. Public areas of the basement level have pink marble wainscot and molded plaster ceilings.

5. Doorways and Doors: The inner vestibule doors with bronze gates are original to the building.

6. Interior Trim: In the main banking hall, nine bays are formed by square piers with pilasters. The Doric mode employed includes capitals of banded paterae, acanthus, and other classical moldings joined by a Greek key frieze. The entablature which forms the crown molding of the ceiling uses mutules, a diamond paneled soffit, guttae, and a blank frieze. The paneled three-part division of the mezzanine wall bays are decorated by cast medallions emulating Roman coins, which are repeated in the dome's collar. The main ceiling is elaborated by octagonal coffering joints by a guilloche pattern studded with large pendant rosettes and smaller paterae. The lower side aisles are unelaborated.

7. Hardware: Original hardware exists throughout the building including doorknobs, locks, hinges, and plates. The private elevator contains original hardware.

8. Mechanical and Electrical Equipment: The building has a combination fresh air supply and exhaust ventilating system with semi-automatic controls. There are two boilers, one working and one on standby, providing steam heat. Fresh air is provided by a 25 horsepower roof-mounted motor. There is no central air conditioning, but separate units are located in the manager's office and front mezzanine. There is a 1200 amp, 230 volt electrical system.

Site and Surroundings

1. Orientation and General Setting: The Anglo and London Paris National Bank stands at the corner of Sansome and Sutter Streets, a major downtown intersection at Market Street. By its bulk and form, the building provides a strong corner and, with the Standard Oil Building, to the north, creates a firm edge on the west side of the Crown Zellerbach Plaza.

With the Standard Oil Building, the Anglo and London Paris National Bank and the adjacent Holbrook Building form a distinctive architectural cluster. This group begins a cohesive district of architecturally significant and historic office buildings along the north side of Bush, including the Postal Telegraph, Shell, Adam Grant, Heineman, "old" Standard Oil, Mills and Russ Buildings. This grouping is noted in the Heritage Downtown Inventory as a key element of the financial area.

PART III PROJECT INFORMATION

This historical documentation of the Anglo and London Paris National Bank was completed by Charles Hall Page & Associates, Inc. in July 1981. It is one portion of the historical/architectural recordation prepared for Citicorp that also includes photodocumentation and documentation of existing original drawings. The recordation conforms with the standards of the National Architectural and Engineering Record, U.S. Department of the Interior, as required under "Mitigation Measures" in the draft Environmental Impact Report prepared for the proposed project at the site.

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